Innovating to improve care and communications

Emerging technologies are providing patients and physicians with important pharmacy benefit and health care information

Merck-Medco online
Merck-Medco Managed Care Online at www.merck-medco.com is now averaging 3 million hits per month.

Merck-Medco has long been a leader in developing and implementing innovative solutions to help plan sponsors meet their dual goals of providing high-quality, yet affordable prescription drug care.

Achieving these goals is more challenging than ever. Factors such as the introduction of new drugs for previously untreatable conditions and the aging of the nation's "baby boomers" put tremendous pressure on budgets for prescription drug benefits.

One way Merck-Medco works with health care providers and plan sponsors to meet this challenge is by applying our clinical expertise and information management capabilities through new communications technologies.

For instance, we are working with hundreds of physicians to assess a variety of emerging "point-of-care" technologies. Some of these enable doctors to access important clinical and cost information while they are seeing patients. Others are being used to electronically transmit prescriptions to our mail service pharmacies. Initial results indicate these innovations will not only be useful in improving patient care and holding down costs, but will also save valuable time for physicians.

For plan members, *Merck-Medco Managed Care Online* provides a convenient new way to access their pharmacy benefit information, as well as a suite of pharmacy benefit services. Now, with just a few clicks of a mouse, patients can order mail service prescription refills or locate any one of about 55,000 retail pharmacies that participate in our *Coordinated Care Network*.

Through innovations like these, Merck-Medco is working with health care providers, plan sponsors and their members to address the need for high-quality, affordable prescription drug care.

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CVS To Fill Online Orders For Merck-Medco

By Robert Conlin
E-Commerce Times
October 6, 1999

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Leading pharmacy chain CVS Corporation (NYSE: CVS) and Merck-Medco Managed Care L.L.C., one of the country's foremost providers of prescription drug care, announced today that CVS will be the exclusive provider of over-the-counter medicine and general health products for Merck-Medco's online business.

The agreement paves the way for Merck-Medco's 51 million health plan members to be able to order products on CVS.com. The Woonsocket, Rhode Island-based CVS re-launched the site in August after it purchased online pharmacy Soma.com for $30 million (US$) last June.

The deal also formalizes an arrangement that makes CVS the only online pharmacy to accept prescription orders from Merck-Medco customers over the Internet. The orders are to be delivered by Merck-Medco's mail service pharmacies or will be available for pickup at CVS stores. CVS' specialty pharmacy company, ProCare, will also become the exclusive provider of specialty pharmacy mail-order services for Merck-Medco plan members.

A CVS spokesman told the E-Commerce Times that the financial details of the alliance were not being disclosed. The companies did say that it includes a "pay for performance" retail pharmacy arrangement.

"For CVS, this agreement is a major step forward for our e-commerce efforts and provides exclusive OTC access to all of Merck-Medco's more

than 51 million members nationwide, many of whom are west of the Mississippi, a region where CVS currently does not have retail stores," said CVS CEO Tom Ryan. "For both parties, this is a broad and strategic alliance that enhances our national reach."

Bringing Together Two Powerhouses

With 4,100 stores across the eastern half of the U.S. and second quarter sales of over $4.3 billion, CVS seemingly knows the brick-and-mortar pharmacy business.

This year, CVS is getting a full tutorial in the online business. Todd Andrews, the company's director of corporate communications, told the E-Commerce Times that it plans to update its Web site to improve upon what he claims is the only real full-service Internet pharmacy.

Merck-Medco makes equally laudatory claims about its Internet business, calling Merck-Medco.com -- which was launched in October of last year -- the world's largest Internet pharmacy. It dispenses an average of 30,000 prescriptions through its Web site every week.

Merck-Medco's members will increase to 65 million by next June, when it begins serving United Healthcare Group and other new clients. In 1998, Merck-Medco managed 322 million prescriptions with a total worth of some $14 billion.

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Merck-Medco and Physicians' Online Pilot New Suite of Internet Applications to Facilitate Physician and Pharmacist Communications at the Point of Prescribing

MONTVALE, NJ, October 22, 1998 -- Merck-Medco Managed Care, L.L.C., announced today that it is partnering with Physicians' Online (POL) to pilot a new suite of Internet applications designed to facilitate communications at the point of prescribing between pharmacists and physicians. The initial focus is on physicians who treat large numbers of patients whose prescription plans are administered by Merck-Medco.

In February, Merck-Medco and POL launched the pilot that connects more than 150 physicians' offices nationwide to a secure network giving physicians the tools to communicate electronically with Merck-Medco. The pilot is being implemented at physician sites with Merck-Medco pharmacies where electronic transmission of prescriptions is permitted by state and federal law. By logging onto the POL network, physicians can authorize and submit the following: (1) prescription renewals, (2) prescription changes, and (3) new prescriptions. The new service will enable easier, more effective communications between Merck-Medco pharmacists and physicians.

"These new applications will help us achieve more efficient communications between physicians and our pharmacists, reduce illegible prescriptions, and result in better, faster, and more cost-effective service for patients and our plan sponsor clients," said Kyle D. Farmer, Vice President, Physician Office Technology, Merck-Medco Managed Care. "By working to provide physicians with a way to use electronic prescribing and messaging, our goal is to improve patient care by preventing major medication errors at the point of prescribing, before the medication is dispensed."

Prescription Renewals

Physicians using the POL network can process electronic requests for mail service or retail prescription renewals. Upon receiving an electronic message that a patient's prescription is up for renewal, using just a few keystrokes or mouse clicks, the physician can provide an authorization for a refill based on the patient's need for more medication.

Prescription Changes

On behalf of plan sponsors, Merck-Medco informs physicians when generic or branded drugs in a particular therapeutic category are available that will reduce a health plan's overall costs. Through the POL network, Merck-Medco can electronically present prescribing alternatives to physicians for their consideration. Physicians will always make the final prescribing decision. Physicians can use the POL network to relay their decision by sending an online reply directly to Merck-Medco pharmacists.

New Mail Service Prescriptions

In the first quarter of 1999, Merck-Medco will allow participating POL physicians to submit new mail service prescriptions for patients over the Internet. This timesaving option gives physicians a way to electronically transmit prescriptions directly to Merck-Medco Rx Services mail service pharmacies, where electronic transmission of prescriptions is permitted by law. Patients who have the mail service option benefit from this timely exchange of information by quicker delivery of their medications.

"Merck-Medco's applications demonstrate the power of the Internet to reduce physician's administrative burden through E-Commerce," said Jean-Louis Echochard, Chief Technology Officer, Physicians' On-line.

"Working with Physicians' Online is part of our ongoing effort to implement medication management systems in physicians' offices with a variety of technology partners nationwide," said Farmer.

Merck-Medco Managed Care, L.L.C., a subsidiary of Merck & Co., Inc., is the nation's leading pharmacy benefit management company, serving benefit plans of employers, unions, commercial and government health plans that provide benefits to more than 51 million Americans, including more than 14 million retirees. Merck-Medco Rx Services, its mail service pharmacy subsidiary, serves patients through 13 state-of-the-art mail service facilities, and its PAID Prescriptions, L.L.C., subsidiary manages prescriptions dispensed at 55,000 community pharmacies nationwide.

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Merck-Medco
Managed Care, L.L.C.

News Release

Merck-Medco Announces Interactive Web Site
Members Gain Internet Access to Pharmacy Benefit Information and Services

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, October 27, 1998 -- Merck-Medco Managed Care, L.L.C., which manages prescription drug benefits for more than 51 million consumers, today publicly unveiled an interactive web site, Merck-Medco Managed Care Online™ (http://www.merck-medco.com), at Internet Health Day, a conference on health care and the Internet sponsored by Intel Corporation.

Merck-Medco Managed Care Online™ gives eligible health plan members access to their pharmacy benefit information and a suite of pharmacy benefit services 24 hours- a-day, seven days-a-week. Merck-Medco's protected member services area enables members to:

- Order mail service prescription refills
- Check the status of mail service prescription orders
- Locate any one of the 55,000 retail pharmacies that participate in Merck- Medco's Coordinated Care Network^{SM}, and obtain turn-by-turn directions
- Order mail service envelopes and claim forms.

Merck-Medco manages pharmacy benefits for more than 1,100 corporations, unions and commercial and government health plans nationwide that provide prescription drug benefit coverage to more than 51 million people.

"Through the Internet, the health plan members we serve now have a convenient and easy way to access their pharmacy benefit information and those services they find most helpful," said Per Lofberg, President, Merck-Medco Managed Care. "Consumer reaction to the on-line services has been tremendous and more than 80,000 on-line member transactions have been completed already."

Merck-Medco Managed Care Online™ protects prescription refill information using domestic-grade encryption (128 bit), the strongest form of encryption available over the World Wide Web today. Merck-Medco also ensures member privacy through a combination of firewalls and continuous, 24 hour-a-day, seven day-a-week monitoring.

"In developing these on-line member services, we identified common reasons that plan members contact Merck-Medco or their benefits administrators about their prescription drug plan," said Lofberg. "We

matched these findings with the needs of our clients, mainly for reduced paperwork and improved administration of their pharmacy benefits, to develop our suite of Internet applications. The result is that health plan members now have a new, time-saving way to get the information and services they value most and health plans have an economical and effective way to meet member needs."

One of Merck-Medco's clients, The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America, for instance, established a link from its medical provider directory to Merck-Medco's member services area. The link enables Guardian members to conveniently access their pharmacy benefits information and process member transactions in real-time.

"Being able to refill prescriptions on-line is an enormous service and convenience for our members," said Ray Cerankowski, Director, Customer Service for Guardian. "Also, the pharmacy locator helped make our retail pharmacy program efficient because members could use the Internet to find a network pharmacy instead of making a phone call."

Lofberg said Merck-Medco envisions leveraging the Internet beyond the current member services capabilities to encompass prescription drug and health management that would include more personalized, patient-specific information customized to each plan member's unique needs and interests. He said Merck-Medco is exploring with other parties the development of sophisticated processes and technologies that will enable the Company to verify the identification of Internet users and securely provide patients with highly personalized services.

"We see the Internet becoming one of our most important communications and transactions tools, helping consumers play a more active role in managing their health conditions. Its potential for helping us deliver higher-quality care for plan members and lower costs for plan sponsors is immense," he said.

New secure applications—now under development—will enable plan members to access a complete listing of the drugs they've obtained under their current benefit plan and receive reminders when vital drug therapies are due for refill. Members will also be able to obtain and print informative profiles—including potential side effects and instructions on proper usage and storage— of almost 300 prescription drugs.

In addition to providing services for plan members served by Merck-Medco, Merck-Medco's site also provides a wide range of up-to-date health information available to all consumers, such as:

- Helpful tips for managing conditions such as diabetes, allergies, heart disease,and others
- Useful links to other health- and wellness-related web sites, including outside, expert non-profit health organizations.

Recently, the site has been averaging over one million hits a month.

Internet Health Day was developed by Intel to provide a forum for news and discussion surrounding the fast-emerging Internet Health industry and market. The ability of the Internet to deliver health-related information, products and services is enabling new benefits for consumers and new opportunities for the healthcare industry and Internet entrepreneurs. Internet Health Day is co-sponsored by the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Merck-Medco Managed Care, L.L.C., a subsidiary of Merck & Co., Inc., is the nation's leading pharmacy benefit management company, serving benefit plans of employers, unions, commercial and government health plans that provide benefits to more than 51 million Americans, including more than 14 million retirees. Merck-Medco Rx Services, its mail service pharmacy subsidiary, serves patients through 13 state-of-the-art mail service facilities, and its PAID Prescriptions, L.L.C., subsidiary manages prescriptions dispensed at 55,000 community pharmacies nationwide.

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Development of an operational medical network (MEDNI model

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Abstract:
This investigation describes the development of a new fault tolerant medical ne (MEDNET) model based on the existing public switch telephone network (PSTN) integrated services digital network (ISDN) and internetworking **(Internet)**. Th includes the original design, development and testing of the required hardware software interfaces to provide a complete medical network model. MEDNET ties doctor, the patient, the hospital, the medical lab, and the **pharmacy** for near r and fault tolerant exchange of medical information the MEDNET model includes following modules: central database server, remote client access, and commun interface. This work proves that medical images and data can be exchanged be healthcare providers which are not geographically adjacent, in a cost effective, and secure manner.

Index Terms:
medical information systems; ISDN; internetworking; telephone networks; swi networks; health care; software engineering; network interfaces; fault tolerant computing; biomedical imaging; **Internet**; operational medical network model fault tolerant medical network; public switch telephone network; integrated ser digital network; PSTN; ISDN; internetworking; **Internet**; design; development software interfaces; hardware interfaces; medical information exchange; centra server; remote client access; communication interface; medical images; medic healthcare providers

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